

REMARKS

I. Status

The Office Action indicates claims 1-11 to be pending in this Application. With this response, claims 1 and 9-11 are amended, and claims 12-18 are added. No new matter has been added.

Claims 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hamano (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0063969).

Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ozaki (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0118467).

Claims 1 and 12 are independent.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112

The Office Action rejects claims 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph “as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.”

With this response, Applicants amend claims 9-11. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 9-11, at least as amended herewith, are in compliance with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

III. Amendment of Independent Claim 1, and Addition of Claims 12-18

With this response, Applicants amend independent claim 1 and add claims 12-18.

No new matter has been added.

In claim 1 as amended herewith, one of the conditions sets forth "3.09 ≤ |M1/M2| < 7.0" (emphasis added). Support may be found, for instance, by the calculation result for Embodiment 1 in TABLE 1 (paragraph [0067]) in the specification. Support for added claims 12 to 18 may be found, for instance, by conditions (1), (2a), and (6) (paragraphs [0049] and [0061]) of the specification.

Applicants have calculated the values of $|M1/M2|$, $|M3/M2|$, and $(Rb+Ra)/(Rb-Ra)$ in claims 1 and 12 for Ozaki (US2002/0118467), Hamano(US2002/0063969), Eguchi (US2003/0197950), and Saruwatari (US2003/0063395), the calculation results being shown in the following table:

claim1	US2002/0118467				US2002/0063969			
	ex1	ex2	ex3	ex4	ex1	ex2	ex3	ex4
3 . 09≤M1/M2 < 7 . 0	6.425	2.841	1.752	1.645	1.059	1.273	0.937	2.291
2 . 0 < M3 / M2 < 8 . 0	0.893	6.608	7.190	8.777	1.494	1.790	1.617	1.716

claim1	US2003/0197950				US2003/0063395			
	ex1	ex2	ex3	ex4	ex5	ex1	ex2	ex3
3 . 09≤M1/M2 < 7 . 0	0.893	0.678	0.676	0.817	0.596	0.711	2.278	1.190
2 . 0 < M3 / M2 < 8 . 0	0.893	0.678	0.676	0.817	0.596	0.711	2.278	1.190

claim12	US2002/0118467				US2002/0063969			
	ex1	ex2	ex3	ex4	ex1	ex2	ex3	ex4
1 . 0 < M1/M2 < 7 . 0	6.425	2.841	1.752	1.645	1.059	1.273	0.937	2.291
3 . 5 < M3 / M2 < 7 . 0	0.893	6.608	7.190	8.777	1.494	1.790	1.617	1.716
0 . 75 < (Rb+Ra) / (Rb-Ra) < 1 . 2	0.893	0.678	0.676	0.817	0.596	0.711	2.278	1.190

claim12	US2003/0197950					US2003/0063395		
	ex1	ex2	ex3	ex4	ex5	ex1	ex2	ex3
1 . 0 < M1/M2 < 7 . 0	0 . 854	0 . 678	0 . 676	0 . 847	0 . 596	0 . 711	2 . 278	1 . 190
3 . 5 < M3/M2 < 7 . 0	0 . 854	0 . 678	0 . 676	0 . 817	0 . 596	0 . 711	2 . 278	1 . 190
0 . 75 < (Rb+Ra) / (Rb-Ra) < 1 . 2	0 . 706	0 . 583	1 . 169	0 . 996	1 . 041	1 . 092	1 . 085	0 . 949

Applicants respectfully observe, for instance, that in the table values in the gray background do not satisfy the conditions in claims 1 and 12. As apparent from the table, the above four references, taken individually or in combination, fail, for example, to disclose, teach, or suggest a zoom lens system satisfying all of the conditions in each of claims 1 and 12.

In view of at least the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 12 at least with the amendments herewith, as well as those claims that depend therefrom, are in condition for allowance.

IV. Dependent Claim Rejections

Applicants do not believe it is necessary at this time to further address the rejections of the dependent claims as Applicants believe that the foregoing places the independent claims in condition for allowance. Applicants, however, reserve the right to further address those rejections in the future should such a response be deemed necessary and appropriate.

(Continued on next page)

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance for which action is earnestly solicited.

If a telephone conference would facilitate prosecution of this application in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required for this response, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-5149.

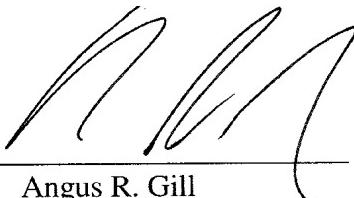
Furthermore, in the event that an extension of time is required, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to the above-noted Deposit Account and Order No.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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